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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY RICK THOMPSON
ANNOUNCES 2003 "PROJECT FAIR ELECTION" INITIATIVE**

SAVANNAH: United States Attorney Rick Thompson announced today that Fred Kramer, an Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District of Georgia, will lead the efforts of his Office in connection with the Justice Department's nationwide Election Day Program for the upcoming November 4, 2003 general elections. AUSA Kramer has been appointed to serve as the District Election Officer for the Southern District of Georgia, and in that capacity is responsible for overseeing the District's handling of complaints of election fraud and voting rights abuses in consultation with Justice Department Headquarters.

On October 1st of last year, Attorney General Ashcroft established a Department-wide Voting Access and Integrity Initiative. In the Southern District the initiative was known as "Project Fair Election." The goals of this Initiative are to increase the Department's ability to deter election fraud and discrimination at the polls and to prosecute these offenses whenever and wherever they occur. The Department's long-standing Election Day Program is intended to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the election process by providing local points of contact within the Department where the public can report possible election fraud and voting rights violations while the polls are open on election day.

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In order to respond to complaints of election fraud or voting rights abuses on November 4, 2003, and to ensure that such complaints are directed to the appropriate authorities, USA Rick Thompson stated that Assistant United States Attorney/DEO Fred Kramer will be on duty in this District while the polls are open. He can be reached by the public at the following telephone number: 912-652-4422.

United States Attorney Rick Thompson said "Election fraud and voting rights abuses dilute the worth of votes honestly cast. They also corrupt the essence of our representative form of government. As crimes against both the individual and the government, they will be dealt with promptly and aggressively. Anyone who has information suggesting electoral corruption or voting rights violations should make that information available immediately to my Office."

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